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" 'The superstition I speak of,' continued he, 'is one of the many, these warm hearted people indulge in, and is certainly very poetical in its texture.'

" 'But, Sir,' interrupted my newly-made acquaintance, pulling forth a richly chased gold watch of antique workmanship, that at once suggested ideas of the '*bon vieux temps*,' 'I must ask your pardon, I have an engagement to keep at the little hut I call my home, which obliges me to proceed there forthwith. If you have so much time to spare as will enable you to walk with me to the end of this little road, it will suffice to make you acquainted with the nature of the superstition in question.'

" I gladly assented; and the priest, disturbing the nibbling occupation of his hack, threw the rein over his arm, and the docile little beast following him on one side as quietly as I did on the other, he gave me the following account of the cause of all the previous riot, as we wound down the little stony path that led to the main road.

" 'There is a belief amongst the peasantry in this particular district, that the ghost of the last person interred in the church-yard, is obliged to traverse, unceasingly, the road between this earth and purgatory, carrying water to slake the burning thirst of those confined in that 'limbo large'; and that the ghost is thus obliged to walk

'Through the dead waste and middle of the night,'

until some fresh arrival of a tenant to the 'narrow house,' supplies a fresh ghost to 'relieve guard,' if I may be allowed so military an expression; and thus, the supply of water to the sufferers in purgatory is kept up unceasingly.*

" Hence it was that the fray had arisen, and the poor mother's invocation, 'that her darling boy should not be left to wander about the church-yard dark and lone in the long nights,' became at once intelligible. Father Roach gave me some curious illustrations of the different ways in which this superstition influenced his 'poor people,' as he constantly called them; but I suppose my readers have had quite enough of the subject, and I shall therefore say no more of other 'cases in point,' contented with having given them one example, and recording the existence of a superstition, which, however wild, undoubtedly owes its existence to an affectionate heart and a poetic imagination."

The volume is embellished by a number of well-executed etchings, which are all in keeping with the humorous character of the work. We are gratified to find, that Ireland is able to produce such a book. A few years ago this was not the case;—and why? because no workman or artist then found encouragement to hold to his native land. The present supply, however, proves the new and increasing demand; and we trust the spirit of improvement will be fostered, and that those publishers who are thus endeavouring to raise the character of our country, will meet with the patronage they merit. The designs are good—"King O'Toole and St. Kevin," and "My New Pittay-a-tees," particularly caught our fancy.

A SKETCH.

It was a festal evening, and the sun
Tracking his path with glory, sank behind
The western hills. A gentle breath of air
Swept southward from the valley, stole along,

* A particularly affectionate husband, before depositing the remains of his departed wife in the grave, placed a pair of new brogues in her coffin, that she might not have to walk all the way to purgatory barefooted. This was vouched for as a fact.

Waking to life and beauty, flower and shrub,
And every tender nursling which the spring,
Breaking the sleep of nature, calls to light.
The little redbreast from the twisted thorn,
Warbled his slender ditty, and at times
The blackbird whistled from the distant grove
His fitful melody—other sound was none.
It was an hour of gentle loveliness, and came
Upon the tranquil spirit like soft music
Half heard in fancy's dreams—I turned to seek
The fair companion of my walk—and ne'er
Seemed she so sweetly beautiful as then.
Her slender form was raised—her damask cheek,
And the loose tresses of her dark hair, caught
The rich deep glory of the parting sun.
Upwards in silent rapture her mild eye
Was turned, to where the crescent moon had hung
Her lamp of pearl above the darkening east.
Rapt she stood, and while her pure soul seemed
To hold communion with the distant heaven,
The unutterable thoughts that were within,
Shaped into meanings o'er her face, diffused
Unearthly softness. Linger long I gazed,
Unwilling to disturb so bright a trance.
It seemed so like the look a seraph doomed
To dwell upon this earth, would turn upon
The path that led to his ethereal home!

17th of March, 1826.

C.

PROFESSOR EDGAR—ABSTINENCE *versus* TEMPERANCE.**TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE.**

SIR—I gladly avail myself of the liberty so generally granted, of endeavouring to influence the public mind on behalf of Temperance Societies, through the medium of your talented, and deservedly popular Magazine. One sore evil in Ireland, with which Temperance Societies have to struggle is, that the population to be reformed have not a taste for reading. For the good, therefore, as well as for the honour of my country, I heartily wish success to every publication, which, like your's, is calculated to create a love for reading, and thus prepare a broad road for the march of improvement. Alas! what need of improvement has our unhappy country. How ignorant, destitute, and degraded, a large part of her dense population! It is not for me to inquire, what influence political causes have had in bringing us thus low. I take, no doubt, a very partial view, and am blindly attached to a favourite theme—yet to the question—what is Ireland's most afflictive scourge? I have but one answer—Intemperance. But why confine my views to Ireland? Intemperance is so alarmingly on the increase in England, as to have attracted the marked attention of her first magistrates. A gentleman, who lately stood for half an hour before the door of a gin-shop, in Manchester, counted dram-drinkers, entering at the rate of ten a minute; and of these, six were women, of whom two were young girls. In Scotland, before Temperance Societies commenced their glorious career of reformation, each family was consuming, on an average, ten gallons of distilled spirits annually. It is acknowledged, that three fourths of all the pauperism in our country, four-fifths of all aggravated crime, one half of all madness, one half of all sudden death, and one-fourth of all